

Some Justice

KEN VICIOUS

Some Justice
Political poems and lyrics



Rebel Press

Bound with a hatred of the State infused into every page

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Some Justice

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Finally, the many audiences who have helped me road-test these and other poems at various readings in the last eight years.

K.V.

List of artwork

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Some Justice

Justice is an elusive idea. We think we know it when we see it. Yet, the justice system is intertwined with the dominant value system that valorises money and greed, rewards the powerful and punishes the powerless. These are the real bases for defining what is 'criminal' in our society. The so-called 'rights' we are supposed to hold against the tyranny of the State are in reality only available to those with power in society.

Many would agree that it is an imperfect system, but would defend its foundations. I would argue that real justice under capitalism is impossible. But from time to time, there are cracks in the decrepit, ossified institutions of the State where some tiny dose of justice seeps in. It is possible to imagine those cracks widening and lengthening, ultimately causing structural instability. It is these cracks that illuminate the otherwise dark journey in the struggle for freedom.

It has been a long journey for some justice in Operation 8. And there is a long way yet to travel.

Operation 8 didn't begin on the 15th of October 2007, but that is the day that became etched in our memories. That was the police's 'termination' day, when approximately 300 police mounted a para-military invasion of the small community of Rūātoki in the North Island of Aotearoa New Zealand. Simultaneously, police carried out raids in some 60 homes across the country, acting on warrants issued under the Terrorism Suppression Act.

The police claimed that there was a group undertaking military training for the purposes of carrying out terrorist acts including assassinating George W. Bush. The primary unifying motive of the people involved was said to be support of tino rangatiratanga, which can roughly be translated as Māori sovereignty.

On that day, 17 of us were arrested and charged with possession of weapons under the Arms Act. We were jailed while the police placed a mountain of intercepted phone calls and conversations from cars and houses before the solicitor-general, whose authority was needed in order to lay charges under the Terrorism Suppression Act.

After a month, the solicitor-general rejected the police's application, and all of us were released on bail still facing Arms Act charges. We were, of course, tremendously relieved and happy to be out of jail. However, the case in many respects had only begun.

Over the next four years, we would all be subjected to restrictive bail conditions limiting our freedom of association and movement. We dealt with the inevitable prejudice in housing and employment that anyone who has been labelled a 'criminal' must endure. Such ostracism was undoubtedly magnified given the 'age of terror' in which we live. More saliently, however, most of those arrested were Māori, and so subject not only to the label of 'terrorist' but also to the routine racism which is the daily reality in this colonised, white supremacist land.

Operation 8 is a little microcosm of the 'war on terror' and its concomitant injustices. As the years have rolled by, it has become more and more a textbook example of the colonising state and the suppression of dissent: a war of attrition against those who dare resist the status quo. It is a devastating experience to be on the receiving end of State violence, and it has graphically demonstrated how the State can and does destroy individuals with impunity.

Now in 2011, the war on terrorism has gone a bit out of fashion with the powerful in Washington, London, Canberra and Wellington. The provocative rhetoric of the Bush/Cheney years is gone. But the expansion of State power and the erasure of many rights remain. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the police, SIS, GCSB and Ministry of Defence all maintain their inflated budgets, personnel and technical capabilities. The long list of laws passed in service of the war agenda remain. Meanwhile, in the name of 'efficiency', long-standing rights – the right to silence, the right to a jury trial, the presumption of innocence, the right to privacy – are bureaucratically wiped away, consigned to use only when it is convenient for the State.

Some justice has come of late. On 6 September 2011, the crown was forced to withdraw charges against 13 of the 17 defendants due to illegally obtained police evidence. Four remain charged, and our struggle for their freedom will continue as long as it takes.

I have learned along the way that justice seldom ever happens like you think it will. It never feels like victory. It feels so much more convoluted and ambiguous. We struggle and learn that the struggle never ends. Along the way, I have discovered solidarity in places that I never, ever imagined it existed. I have found endless wells of support and goodwill from people on the streets.

I have also discovered the power of creative resistance. Over the past four years, people have produced music CDs, movies, books, art exhibitions, musical pieces, essays and now, this book of poetry to examine the injustices of this particular case. This creative resistance is essential for understanding not just the facts, but for feeling the pain and hurt and for expressing the rage and sadness felt by so many. As importantly, it channels those feelings into a new powerful energy to keep struggling on for justice and freedom.

What would real justice be? For starters, it would have to be founded on decolonising this country: an end to institutional-

ised white supremacy and everyday prejudice. As a corollary to that, it would involve moving Māori to the centre of decision-making about what system or systems of justice operate here. From that point, the return of stolen lands and the resumption of Māori self-determination would be the clear template for a just society.

— Valerie Morse, September 2011

POETRY



Urewary
AN ACT OF CONSPIRACY

Commissioner White woke sweating in the night
Reds under the bed and terrorists in his head
‘We spent a load of dough with nothing to show –
In Zaoui’s case we lost a lot of face –
This time we won’t be done, we’ve found a smoking gun.’

Commissioner Broad colluded in the fraud
Told Helen Clark he’d heard a fart in the dark
‘Sign the warrant please, you can trust the Polize.’
She said, ‘Mr Plod, call in the Terror Squad
Make the crims confess, justify the SIS
They had napalm and clearly meant harm.’

Annette King refused to do a thing
‘Cops are autonomous, their agents anonymous.’
Cullen passed the buck, he didn’t trust his luck
With an election near, he had reason to fear.
The solicitor-general, vegetable and mineral
Showed his redneck face, prejudiced the case
Said the TSA’s no good, and he wished he could
Hit them with the book, they were definitely crooks

Commissioner Fraud should fall on his sword
Resign for good, like he said he would
Instead he’ll temporise, manufacture more lies,
Delay the case for years, trade on public fears

As their memory fades of the nationwide raids
Operation Eight, coercive arm of the state
Confiscation line used to define
The power of the Crown, in putting rebels down
Cop ninjas Nintendo, trial by innuendo
Suppressed evidence, people sitting on the fence
Trial by judge alone on a Star Chamber throne

Just remember this: it all amounts to piss-
All, a trumped-up rap, a total crock of crap.



Anvil

You don't have to go far to find
The right wing
There are no politicians
For the working class
The poor or unemployed
Even if some of these vote for them misguidedly.
They are the hammer of the poor
There is no allowance for failure
Or being on the edges of beyond
For eccentricity and simple mistakes
And never having had the chance
To get started

It's all about judging others
To maintain one's own position
And washing hands in a plastic bucket
It's all the hypocrisies plus the biggest one
Of claiming not to be hypocritical
Wealth and status
Create the self-fulfilling judgement

Newsreaders and sportspeople
Lead the blind further down the road to nowhere
Entertaining to death, informing with propaganda
Beware of those who wear dark suits
And read speeches to sheep

Beware of those who appear on television
Every night to push the US presidential-corporate line
Beware of sedation and seduction
And all the dogma they shove at you
Smokescreen and flashing mirrors
Snowstorm of paper and excuses and alibis
To protect and defend to the end
An image deeply opaque behind glass
Fragile as eggshell

Don't try to argue with them
Debate and inconclusion is their bread and butter
Ridicule and mockery are the weapons to employ
And the lateral thinking which undermines the senseless
Don't let them get away with the line
That there are two sides to every story
Don't let them fool you
With the philosophy of delusion

Facts are either right or wrong
But a politician is never wrong
Having power is never having to say you're sorry.

Aurifer

Politicians prefer sheep and goats
And drugs that pacify
Mass media serves big business
Cities become the domain of the rich
Locked in apartments, complaining of noise
From the starving rabble in the streets

It's the French revolution, new nobility
Nouveau riche who have not learned their history
And therefore can't forget it
Guillotines and tumbrils, pyramids of heads
This time it is likely to be
Bankruptcy, eviction and dispossession
Another levelling effect, flow of wealth
In its natural direction
Against the upward gush of global capital
Into the ogre's castle, the tyrant's mansion

Delusional lives and their trappings
Dissolved by the fire hose of justice
Will crumble like temporary sandcastles
Into the relentless stream
Particles of gold drifting seaward
Towards their cradle.

Autumn in the mind

They talk of autumn
But the insects haven't heard them
Bowie sang for two hours in the rain

Autumn is in the mind
Age begins there when you give in
To the roll call of slights and failures,
Small disasters, unhealed fractures of the self
When you begin, like the inmates
Of man-made god-awful institutions
To hunch, stoop, adopt submissive postures
Seen in every concentration camp,
Mental hospital and retirement home
Where the will wilts or desiccates
Banana people bent into the fetal position
Which we all adopt in our sleep
Or when the black horses ride roughshod
Over the huddled bodies of the poor in spirit
Who hold their depression like a stomach ache

Privilege expects submission
Wealth requires servants
Poetry describes abuse
Turns your worst moments into art
While forcing you to relive them.

Buffalo Bill and Nixon

I fell in love with Miss USA's
Airbrushed blonde perfection
Her thigh lengthened three inches
In half a generation
She weighed one hundred twenty pounds
Before succumbing to inflation

I fell in love with the USA
It's a candyfloss confection
There's the biggest, tallest, largest, best
A superlative collection
Fastest, mostest, best and worst
Buffalo Bill and Nixon
Have a Big Mac, have a nice day
And keep a tight fundamentum

Bullets first, questions later
No time for quiet reflection
Between the mouth and the brain
There is a disconnection
Fuelled by coffee and cocaine
Speed with no direction
For anything that gives you pain
The dollar lends protection

Slick Willie and Meathead George
Avoided introspection
There's free speech but watch what you say
They allow no insurrection
Sincerity is a mask you wear
Covering deception
Show a brave face, remember to smile
Though filled with deep dejection

So get me a ticket to LA
I'll leave without hesitation
Ignorance is bliss. Because of this
I'll join the idiot nation

I'm in love with the USA
It's a candyfloss confection
(The fixation with cleanliness
Suggests a deep infection)
There's the biggest, tallest, largest, best
A kaleidoscopic spectrum
Fastest, mostest, best and worst
Buffalo Bill and Clinton
Have a Big Mac, have a nice day
And keep a tight fundamentum.

Clown army

It's a great disguise, behind humour
Attacking a greater idiocy
The national museum sells out
For a substantial booking fee
(Any event is allowed at Our Place)
Businessmen sell the means of death
Like Harry Lime

Psychopaths and addicts don't care
When black dots – people – stop moving
On the other side of the world, or next door
The means justifies the ends:
Another sale or sell-out
Each one easier than the last
Until you become
What you do

The war on terror has been profitable
For the merchants of death. The government
Sends its trade minister to approve
The military-industrial alliance, Mussolini-style
Corporate conquest in which the local
Boys have a bit-part, supplying some small
But essential component for the weapon
Rubbing shoulders here with the big boys

Lockheed Martin et alia, who deliver so
Efficiently free-market-style
Democracy and
 \ /
Bombs

Suits mix with uniforms, security guards
With police, behind barricades, helping
Us to shut the place down

They appear hard of hearing – it has taken
Five years for our message to strike home:
‘War profiteers get out’

Clowns armed with baguettes
Are a metaphor, feeding
And assaulting funny bones harmlessly
Unlike the war-sharks with teeth
Sharpened by policy.

Coastal

On a day like this, heading for dead centre
Winter unlike the reality of the north
Of Europe, the sun smiles on Paekakariki
A long lazy road parallels the shore
People doze in clapboard cottage
Or bungalow washed with salt
You see why they call it coasting
How life can be easier, nestled
In that seaside settlement
Disturbed only by earthquaking
Heavy goods trains
Or the rattle of electric passenger units

There is of course a drawback
In every dream and ideal
Sun-washed means washed out
Wrinkled and de-elasticated
Squinting lines like crows walking;
The backs of your hands
Without adequate protection
Turn into paper that tears and bleeds

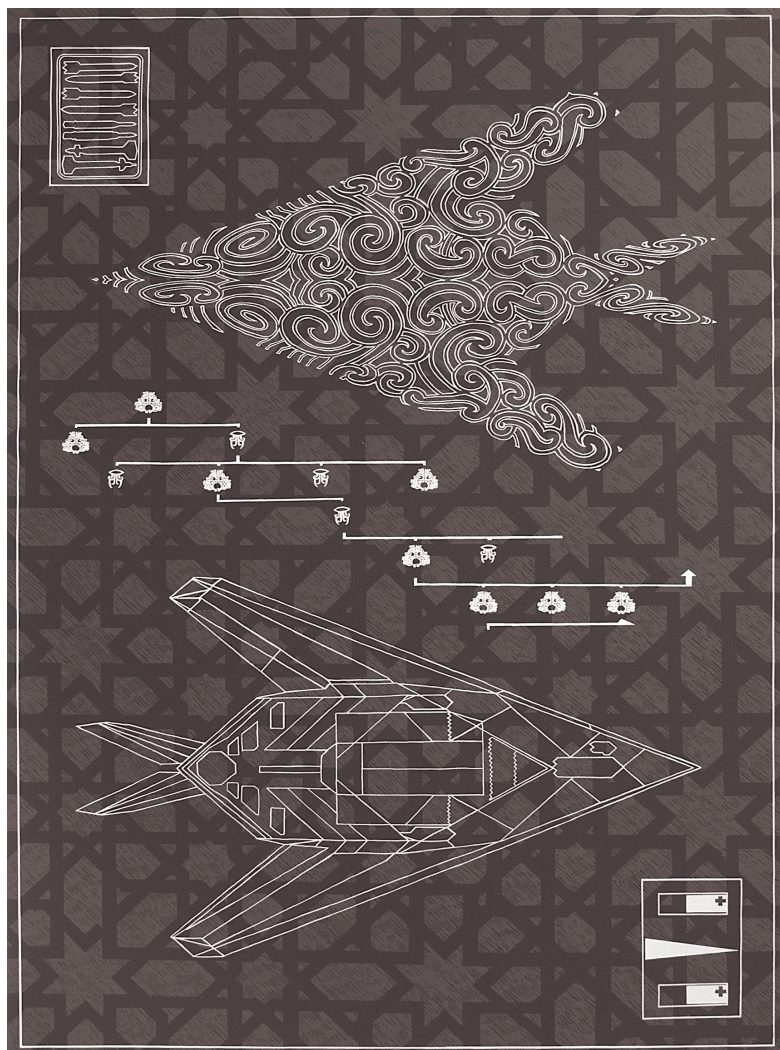
But at night you are washed to sleep
By the roll and surge of the sea
You turn like a log borne downriver
Massaged against the boulders

Papered smooth by the sandy beach
Seasoned and marinated in salt
Useless for firewood, left as monument
Too hard to cut with axe or chainsaw
Useless but still beautiful
Like a life spent well, capped by rest

In the white Italian beneficence of sun
The sleepy town wakes for breakfast
Seated outdoors on the first of July

If the country were wealthy
There would be no room to move
For three-storey palaces with sea views
A used car lot full of 4x4 tanks
And the driven people who go with them
Seeking to carve a path to town, greed
Everywhere, for the wrong things

It doesn't cost you to breathe sea air, yet;
Your eyes aren't blinded by necessity
To turn four figures a week
The apocalyptic horsemen from IRD,
Debt collection and repo agencies
Don't yet breathe foam down your neck
Repossessing the soul you never had
Or never realised you had
Until too late.



Consume Obey Die

They are the merely perplexed
Who want something different but lack control
Of the means of production and propaganda
They are the consumers
Gulping down all they are sold by fast-food clowns
And kings of hamburger meals
Having their minds washed by soap operas
And being lulled to sleep with balletic violence
Death real or imagined that makes invasion
For any reason, on any terms, acceptable

Cry for the children of Afghanistan and Iraq
If you can, dull-eyed and dry-eyed from a million TV deaths
Listening to commentators in bed with the army
Being sold a line by those who have been bought
The US makes friends the way it always has
With a wedge of dollars and a baseball bat

Sickened by the race, I look for some
Small intelligent planet to adopt me
Floating up each night from my bed
Into the velvet sky, but only in imagination.

Dodder

The morning begins late
I'm allowed to finish shaving
Before the first phone call –
Old Tom who moved to Raumatī
Living near the park, not on the sea
Repairing to the beach and café
After breakfast, to read the paper
And contemplate his unheard message
Like a clarion sounded in the desert
Or Antarctic wastes where words freeze

To him, the fault lies in administration
Not human nature. He is old enough
To remember the army of the upright
Incorruptible and unvenal servants
Of the state and society. He has had
The misfortune to live long enough
To see the bureaucracy collapse
Into postmodern mental illness

Reading the paper for confirmation
Of the nation's decline, he sips coffee
Walks the shoreline ordered by the sea
In a diurnal rhythm which lasts
Down the years, despite storms
Forming a line of driftwood and jetsam

False teeth, fish boxes, items of plastic
Bright coloured as children's toys
The sea has rejected these playthings
As not fitting the décor, undegradable
Mere rubbish, which they are to us also

As the sky weeps violently
Driving home its uncut nails of rain
Tom stands at highwater, faces west
Opens his mouth to shout again
Against a deaf wind.

Ed is dead

In an ideal world his family wouldn't have to go to church
Even once

Ed wouldn't grow old, deaf, decrepit and forgetful
Like Superman with false teeth and ragged Y-fronts

In an ideal world

He'd climb Everest every morning before lunch

Hand-in-hand with his 200 imitators who never came back

In the afternoon he'd drive a turbo-charged

tractor to the South Pole

Fuelled by bio-diesel and penguin fat

And in the evening we would congratulate ourselves

For being New Zealanders

And bathe in the reflected glory of the

Antarctic sun lining the face

Of Super-Ed

Eternally grateful that because he climbed

the highest mountain

And drove his farmer's chariot to the low-sagging

buttocks of the planet

We don't have to

In an ideal world

The Unknown Warrior wouldn't sleep fitfully in concrete

Disturbed by rush-hour traffic on the inner city 'bypass'

He'd shoot a few terrorists before breakfast, keep us all safe

Win both World Wars and sundry others
With the help of Charles Upham, VC and bar
And in the evening
Both would appear on Campbell Live
And we would congratulate ourselves for being
New Zealanders

(Though, to be pedantic, the Unknown Warrior
could be anything at all –
Even a robotic alien reptile from Jupiter or Saturn)

In an ideal world
Pigs (not the blue variety) would fly into the frying pan
Lay two shell-less eggs
And turn into bacon
Politicians would be deaf-mutes
This life and the next would not be Hell
Everyone's face would appear on a five-dollar note
For 15 minutes, even if they were ugly, but
There would be no ugliness or physical disproportion anyway
Everyone would look like David Beckham or Posh Spice
In a universal, unrelenting panorama of Hollywood
Combined with Madison Avenue, such that
At night men would dream of non-existent women
with short legs, flat chests and large backsides
And wake up all sweaty and unfulfilled

Everyone would be rich
And like the rich, would perform no useful work
From the comfort of their armchairs
Everyone would be a mountaineer, explorer, All Black
Or Silver Fern – there would be no competition
Everyone would be a winner
Everyone would have their place in the team
Of virtual participants, mind-altering drugs supplying
the happiness of success

And any other positive thing that might be lacking
In this imperfect world

(Some contrarians would wish to be poor, of course,
But even in an ideal world not all wishes are granted)

So thank you, Super-Ed, for knocking that illegitimate
mountain off

And thank you, Unknown Warrior and Charles Upham,
VC and baah, baah, baah

For despatching several other illegitimate persons,
on our behalf

For being heroic state-sanctioned murderers

Allowing us to rest on *your* laurels

To sleep the sleep of sheep

And of the vicariously just

But this is a far from ideal world:

Ed's dead

He was a not-so-social climber, a high achiever

Tall poppy of the tallest peak

Reaching the geophysical pinnacle of human achievement

Before that bastard,

Death, knocked him off.

The Elect

I listen to the news, expecting nothing –
Only blindfold derelicts punching air
They stagger around in threadbare suits
Pyjamas showing through defects at knee and elbow
If it were a game it would be comical
If they were trusted, even by children,
It would be a tragedy ...

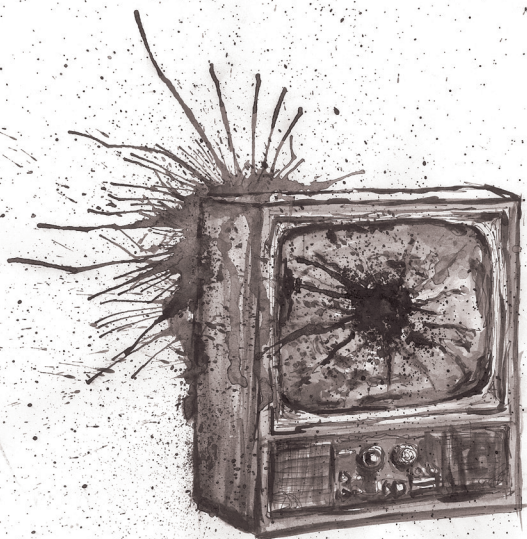
... the windbag elect
Perform their tightrope act without a wire
But plenty of safety nets and security blankets –
Pensions, passing the buck and officialese
Which explains everything and nothing
Honesty is a word in the dictionary –
Our dictionary. Theirs has many lacunae
That an undersized conscience may slip through
Like the camel on its way to Hell
The ego swelled with wind, the mind fat,
Conscience sedated with the heroin of votes
The adulation of old ladies in town halls
The attention of reporters with pens at the ready
And a five-second shot on the six o'clock news.

The Elite

Clouds sail past like battleships at full speed
Ripe to burst open when they hit the mountains

While the world turns and tilts
To the point where things slide
Avalanche into a confused heap of detritus
Like the mess politicians leave behind them
Slagheaps above the schoolhouse
Cause and effect, chain of disaster
Leading back to small decisions
Made by small people elevated to power
Bad parents to their sheep

It is our job as writers and thinkers
To show the short trousers, the knock-knees
The bent and crippled pygmy
Within the rusty oversized armour.



Today the sky weeps for humankind
Who move like ants so far below
Apparently industrious, really confused
Finding food randomly, then forgetting
Where they hid it

Stupidity is far more than intellectual
There are those who cannot begin to read
The picture book of the universe
Despite or because of holding university degrees
Society is a dumb mass, common denominator
IQ divided into fractions, fed by television's
Idiot index, porridge for the tired or lazy
Propaganda tool for the powerful
To husband and augment their power
And use it with the sadism they enjoy

More people should imitate Elvis
And put a silver bullet through the screen
Take the hobbles and governors off
And begin to move freely again
In the purified open air of thinking.

Emigrés

Sleep is the restorative you can't have
Money comes and goes like the tide
Leaving behind material flotsam
The things that hold you in mud
Up to your back where the monkey rides

I feel the need to apologise to Paul
For the tactlessness of kiwis
'You got the convicts, we got the misfits
And the mad people.' I absolve myself
And my family from that accolade
My father chose to come here
He wasn't pushed by a maiden aunt
Who bought land in a country
She would never see. Investment
In the afterlife, and a buying off
Of a prodigal nephew. The colonies
Were full of such. Remittance boys
Or those paid off on a long journey
A substitute death. The land cursed them
And the houses they erected. The land
Whose hair they burned, whose skin
They scarified. Greed turned to need
The harvest was small, the weather fickle

Flood and drought and eternal wind
Drying the bones after they were picked clean

I feel out of place here, always did
I've never asked others if they feel it too
I thought it was just me, alien in fact
A body in a box, buried in the wrong land.

Fall

Without change you shrivel
Trade freedom for security
Become a slave to the Pharaoh
And the policeman inside

You don't honour your parents
By being exactly like them
Every generation invents itself
Lives in another world
Has alien children
Finds its own truth and hypocrisy
Its heteronomy being different
And yet the same

Eating from the tree of knowledge
Suffering indigestion
Falling with flaming wings
That give off false light.

Good look

Politicians look much better on radio
Or in the dark
They look better still
Seen from a rear view
Hidden by black clothing
And a back fringe of black hair
Made out of cellophane
With black tape over their mouth

People look better
Sitting in a room full of soot
With the curtains drawn
At four in the morning
When they are asleep
Before the secret police come
Wearing black leather gloves and balaclavas
In a black car made of metal
Thicker than your teeth

Politicians come across better on television
With the sound turned off
And an axe through the screen.

It helps to have perspective:
At infinity, opposites agree
Or if not, it doesn't matter

Things look prettier
From a passing spaceship
Ten thousand kilometres away
The earth looks benign
You could imagine it uninhabited
Or just turned out of the factory
Where stars collide and fuse
More innocent than a neonate
With a brain as smooth as cheese
Unacquainted with the concept of self
And arms too short to grab anything.

His name is Jim

I worked the night shift. My day
Was sacrificed to fitful sleep
While the city celebrated a war party
Launched a new religion and a holy relic

The unknown warrior would maybe
Have something else to say about that –
The indignity of being paraded naked
Disintegrated and condensed to dust
Through a city lined by banks and bankers
To an elaborate granite grave designed
So he will never get out of it.

The figureheads of state call him up
On a magic telephone
Force him back into the weak flesh
That the more sensitive among us
Would rather dump like a rusting car
That has worn out its metal heart

The human heart pays good money for symbolism
The newspapers said that people wept
As for a familiar friend, the same people
Who enjoyed Baghdad firework displays
Of death in the safety of their living room

At evening the wind drops, defeated
The city gets over its excess of emotion
Facing the next day with embarrassment.
I'm glad to have slept through it
Not even hearing the gunshots
Which the unknown man, if he still has ears,
Would not especially want to hear
He fought in a more civilised conflict
Oxymoron I know, but bombardment
Was primitive and limited, not as now:

We sleep while fire rains down on babies.

He ran a mediocre freak show
With himself as the main exhibit
For some reason the gullible fish
Swallowed it for fifteen years

He combined entertainment with news
But not much of the latter
Interviewing people who could not match
His own troll-like freakishness
Desperate for limelight scrutiny
Despite what that scrutiny would bring

The oxygen of publicity
And the heroin of fame
Became his strange metabolism
He withdrew in his days off
Holidays shrank him back to size
The Toogood of his day,
He learned to imitate that great man
But measured only half his bulk
Even in pomposity and self-image
Television raised one and sank the other
Both were broken on its wheel
The short statement and one-liner
Were not theirs, paid a dollar a word to fill in time
To limp and gimbal on a glass stage

And shuffle off like prompt cards
When mortal disease attacked
Dying twice or three times
First in mind, then body, then reputation
Peeled off like make-up after the show
Idiot lantern light on a blank wall
Tracing shadows and illusions
And artefacts of intelligent thought
Soundbite, infotainment, death

An empty word hangs like a soap bubble:
Interface between nothing and nothing
You blurt and bluster your way
Through another 'human interest' story
Reducing it to meaningless telegraphy
With a dollar total at the bottom
How you drew your salary with straight face
And slept untroubled at night
Only the book of doom will tell

Finally, your image was sucked into the centre
Of the screen, electrons down the plug-hole
Death is the off button, blessed relief.

Am I the only one who dislikes
'Motherhood and apple pie'?
When I hear the word television
I reach for my Swedish-made axe
Being a punk comes naturally
Wanting to question everything
Especially the ants that conform
Can't live without their uniforms
And the cops inside their heads

Am I the only one who dislikes motherhood
High-rise apartments, shopping malls,
Expensive fast cars, flat screen televisions
Roasted coffee shops to waste time in
City so-called landscapes full of concrete
Roads that cut up the face of the earth
The waste and excrement of society
Discarded each day like guilt

Am I the only one to see politicians
As the panders for business that they are
Wanting you to buy more, work more
And die before you qualify for a pension?

The elite never see past their needs
Everything is subsumed to those addictions

Trivia is what happens to the poor
Apple pie is what you offer them in the sky
And motherhood produces more workers
So that the rich never have to work
Or lose sleep at night for wondering
Who will fill their factories and shops
To print wads of Monopoly money
To line their coffin nest.

King Kong

It's still hard to get up and going
Even on the best of days and not too early
After a couple of good nights' sleep
The hard questions fall like hail
On a tin roof, rattling you – Like
What are you really meant to do

I don't envy the big hairy film-maker
Whose success just means more work
Who can go no further than back
And around again, making remakes

New experiences are hard to come by
In a narrow field, under orders
You get built into the machine
Be assured your public don't want you to rest
Or sleep through the dawn
They are addicted to the spectacle
It's their means of escape
But there is morbidity and mortality
When you burn the candle
You'd be better giving the right message, one
More lasting than light flashed on a screen

Every book has to be rewritten
In the clothing and language of the age

Films do a disservice, concretising
The butterfly thoughts of the writer
Which readers with imagination
Can collect and order
In so many different ways.

Line of the day

Propaganda can be loud or soft
Wrapped in money, pandering to fear
From loudspeaker or palm-sized radio
Straight into your brain, bypassing
The censor and the frontal lobes
With subliminal dog-whistle

Like the puppetry of politics
Punch and Judy pavlovian show
Bludgeon the masses with stick and carrot
And throw out the baby
If it seems expedient

Bright colours need not signify
A bright future or a creative mind
Alcohol has drowned more than the sea
And tranquillised a generation

In the grey light of winter morning
You reach for the revolver
Five minutes ahead of the alarm clock.

List poem

The roll of honour of literary dignitaries
Is given as a hollow sound:
The sound of bells in a monastery
Which is given as the sound of squirrel noises
In the forest of academia where you need
A master's degree to write poetry, blow your nose
Or enact a bowel movement

It is given as the sound of the back legs of wetas
Burrowing in rotten tree trunks
A dry sound, of dead leaves rustling in the library
Of the University of Babylon or Megiddo
Which is given as an artichoke sound
Which is given as a taupata sound
Which is given as a commercial media sound
The sound of two men in black suits
Buying and selling human lives

Which is given as a political sound
Which is given as a poet laureate sound
A grudging gratitude for a state pension sound
The sound of words striking against each other
In a dry river bed during times of earthquake
Which is given as the sound of abacus beads
Knocking together in an old wooden frame
Which is given as the sound of snapping fingers

In the dining rooms of the rich
And the mansions of Kelburn and Kohimarama
Which is given as the empty sound of approval
Coming from the throats of wine drinkers and latte addicts
Which is given as the sound of the seal of approval
Clapping, barking and performing tricks
Balancing a ball on its snout

Which is given as the sound of a list poem
Or a recipe poem, word joined to word by formula
Which is given as the sound of a golden handshake
The sound of a newsreader reading the idiot board
Words transmitted by idiot lantern

Which is given as the sound of a corpse being wrapped
In money and buried in an arid place in the mind
Which is given as a scribbling and scrabbling sound
Of bitten fingernails scratching at the glass walls
Of the insular institute of hyperbole
Prison of small fame or minor infamy

Which is given as the sound of one hand clapping
Itself.

London

I never recovered ground, went to London
Felt the same alienation from self
And from humanity, miles of pavement
Giving me back nothing but the sound
Of disconsolate footfalls in cheap shoes

Lived like a cave-dweller in the heart
Of the great dehumanising metropolis
Returning at night to my cell in the prison
Devised by men, filing cabinet of Babylon

At weekends I explored the limits
Of my prison sentence, museum of time
Pre-shrunk to size in a catalogue
Which I clutched to myself in winter
Becoming acquainted with snow and ice
And the cold shoulder, look and speech
Of one's reluctant hosts, the English.

Loophole

I search the New Zealand law for loopholes
Regarding the treatment of Māori
And their sovereignty over the coasts
I wonder how many civil unions
We will be allowed to have
Without being called bigamists
If we will be able to shoot a politician
In the cause of saving the nation
If there are any controls on the police
And why judges should not have a say
When parliament makes decisions
Which lead to the everlasting bonfire

I wonder what relevance a monarch has
In a land on the far side of the earth
Why we should ever have to be loyal
To someone who never paid death duties
And lives off accumulated capital

I wonder what the law has to say
About truth, compassion and love:
Not very much at all, I would think –
Those human qualities have to find their way
Through chinks and cracks in the façade
Of each and every faceless institution
Created by dead white men to doom others

To the non-life of subservience
Working so that the wolves grow rich
Being obedient so that others may live
Above and beyond the law and society
In a mansion on a hillside, looking down
On the masses they exploit

Such is the metaphor and letter of greed
The slimy oil that runs the machine
Which occasionally turns into a guillotine
And sees off those who established it

I wonder how much money has been stolen
In taxes, duties and lost employment
In sickness whose root cause is the State
Seeking to fund a war on its own people

Such is the nature of hierarchy:
Self-serving, self-justifying, paranoid,
Resentful of having to canvass votes
To give an appearance of democracy

The State is an open grave
Swallowing aspirations and dignity
As approachable as a dragon in a cave
Hoarding wealth and land which if unlocked
Could enrich almost everyone
But that is to think with the mind of the simple
In a world of cunning and malice.

Machine music

In the grand filing cabinet of indifference
In the slave farms of communism and capitalism
In the ghost of the machine which haunts
The bought or confiscated land
Exploitation from factory to shops
To schools that are animal pens
Only humour will save us from ourselves
And from the walking dead who never smile

This is the curse and doom we live under
To repeat the mistakes of all generations
Not even creatively. History is not so particular
Not detailed enough to learn from in our case
So we learn the game of trivial questions
The hard way.



One love

The fracture lines of wealth and poverty
Are starkly drawn on our map
This national day of celebration
Bob Marley's birthday, Waitangi Day
Schizophrenic commemoration
With little connection between the two
Here at Hataitai velodrome
The poor listen to poor man's music
Over the hill at Government House
A thousand invited suits have afternoon tea
Their ancestors ripped off the land
But who's going to admit it?
The president's grandfather bankrolled the Nazis
And other things you'd rather not hear about

A crowd of us stage a march through the tunnel
To the gates of impotent privilege
Confronted by police who stop us
Marching up the long drive
The titular head of state is in residence
And sends down a foreign-accented secretary
Who talks of democracy and votes
Not about the legitimate grievances
Of a minority whose votes won't change a thing

If voting changed anything it would be illegal
There is no justice, just us

The bread and free circuses of this holiday
Detract from what is really going on
Weapons of mass distraction
Television, radio, newspapers, magazines
Buzz in the head like a swarm of flies
In the desert and poverty of truth
Some find refuge in work neurosis
Which drowns out other neuroses
The need to make money is subverted
As appetite is converted into layers of fat
Fat in the head and body
Around the heart, choking off feelings of love

Bob Marley sang of one love
He was right – in the end
There is one love but many hates
Human nature ensures we will have a rough ride
On its conveyor belt of unhappiness, age to age.

Perfect storm

A fine March day but clouds gather
In the heads of bank economists
Commentators take up the story
Listing the gold letters of doom
Old discredited finance minister
Talks of his comeback trail
You know there is desperation
If the people buy that a second time round
Believing the lies about wages
And worshipping the god of productivity
And unsustainable development
As if his nakedness is forgotten
Along with the low-wage nightmare he
Ushered in through deregulation

Pull the other one, Mr Douglas
Pigs will vote before you ever win a seat
In South Auckland. Maybe your pig farm
Could be a constituency in that case
While the clouds push together
Full of hard black rain, driving
Us into the red

Policies as old as his moustache
Continue to be unrolled in prospectus
By men in sharp suits

In the used car yard of the world
Where second-hand junk is rolled out
And sold to the poor and gullible
While the rich who grew fat on their backs
Skim by in their flash limousines
Among them the cabinet ministers
Who perpetrated the fraud and robbery
Who blame world markets, uncertainty,
Trade barriers, other governments –
Anything but themselves – after all,
They handed over responsibility
For running the country's economy
To big business and the maelstrom
Of global market forces, where only
The biggest ships survive destruction

The local government prides itself
On building roads to destruction
For cars whose hearts will stop
Deprived of their life-blood oil
But radical change is unthinkable
Those in power, however petty,
Don't want the status quo to change

Well beyond their use-by date
Wearing their threadbare thoughts
In the desert of the materialist mind
Rustling with the wings of locusts
The dryness of money has killed them.

There are other cities than Auckland
Ones with heart and a creative soul

Here in the south
You could number two hundred poets
And twice as many artists
More during office hours
When the school is crammed
With painters, sculptors, artisans
Possessed of a lighter touch
On whom the system has a slender hold
Enchanted as by the pied piper
Who led both rats and children
And those who were still children
Though the story leaves that out.

Pop culture

In suburbia nobody can hear you scream
You open your mouth but it's drowned
By the insistent shouting of money matters
And the squawks of chimpanzee children
You find yourself bringing up

You let television do the thinking
And advertising do the talking
To replace the voice of childhood in your head
You try to fill the gaps in your existence
Which the cold southern wind blows through
With supermarket produce and perfect vegetables
It leaves you unsatisfied but wanting more
The packaging is showy and hollow
Like the modern age of wood pulp fiction
Odd stories shoehorned into your skull
Distorted so much you scarcely recognise
The human content, let alone reality

You buy clothes designed for another body
Shoes that make you totter about
As if you've got Parkinson's prematurely
You obsess about calories and protuberance
Dream of waking up another shape
Having been photoshopped in the night
And photographed for Woman's Weekly

Or the latest Postie Plus
Dream of being swept away from Pakuranga
By some thin famous dude with steel blue eyes
A combination of Pierce Brosnan and Brad Pitt
And every other dreamboat actor who's really
Just a little shabby around the edges
American, far too decadent for you

You drink sparkling wine from the bargain bin
Imagining a champagne breakfast with Britney
Before she came apart at the seams
As cheap soft stuffed toys made in China do
You perform as little housework as possible
Letting the dust and long hair accumulate
Into little balls you can gather by hand
And burn along with other garbage:
Packets, holed hosiery, glossy magazines,
Undegradable nappies, bales of shopping bags,
A cartload of soft tissues which are still
Harder than your own mind
You sleep on sheepskin which becomes you
As you graze anticlockwise around the hill
Hair over eyes, never looking up
With one leg shorter than the other
Tethered in a suburban grass paddock
Turning cellulose into cellulite

Your kids cease to be much fun
Once they've passed the pet animal stage,
Been relinquished to the education system
Because you know how little it did for you
You drive them back and forth
Feeling like the stop-start shuttle in a loom
Weaving a thick grey woolly blanket
Delivering and collecting them like letters
Or small packets of misery in the rain

You begin to dislike the reproductive act
Seeing it as repetitive science fiction
Where aliens and monsters recreate themselves
Invade your body like a gynaecologist or fetus
Or cancer that consumes and grows bigger
Mimicking the perfect corporation
Mining your body for its resources
And selling them back to you at profit
You wish you were young and unblemished
Like a supermarket melon
That you didn't have to cover up your skin
Or drench it with pesticides and fertiliser
Seen up close, the cracks begin to show
Where the rivulets of tears have flowed

You try to read books but they make no sense
Describing a world you don't inhabit
Dual citizenship is not allowed
You can't belong to that and Disneyland

Depressed, on any given day
In a week that never wants to end
You watch daytime television
Where people are comfortingly alien
Because they live only on TV

You luxuriate in doing little
Between breakfast and lunch
And the after-school run when you
Punch the time-clock of motherhood
And later prepare the evening meal
Give purpose to the day by making something
The human tide will wash away with milk
You feed the hungry larvae first
Packaging them for bed
At six-thirty the Unknown Warrior comes

Weary from work, kisses you and them
Eats, says goodnight to them, relaxes
With the remote control. Saturday
Is time enough for fatherhood

On yet another morning, alone again,
You attempt a prison escape in your mind
You look outside, but the washing hides the view.

Pyramid scheme

Times have caught up
With the dung beetles and hoarders
With the shoppers and consumers
With the bankers and salespersons
Who helped to build the house of cards
Out of stock options and credit default grenades
Lobbed from left field, into the living room

No longer can certainty be bought
The future has no end. The end is unknown
How many jobless, how many mortgages
Called in and houses pulled apart
How many banks and businesses will fall
Before the tide recedes again
And debtors can sleep at night?

But is the system reparable? People are not
When the damage is terminal, bankruptcy
And starvation. The misery is private
While being shared by masses
The confidence is a façade, the building gone
While economists can only tell you about the past
Not make reliable predictions

Economy is about uncertainty, an attempt
To control the weather. The unexpected

Can be expected to occur. Money vanishes
Into the gaping mouth of Mammon
The consuming fire of greed and compound interest
Lays waste like a Roman army
Merciless, mercenary, impersonal, imperial
Building a city on the bodies of the fallen.

Rome

He's lost hair but kept his self-assurance
The years haven't changed that at all
He still knows everything and nothing
Speaks confidently and wears a grey suit
Used to work for Hallmark Cards
Making a healthy profit out of sentiment
Now he's a full-fledged, well-fed, salaried
Apologist for the capitalist American Way

Once he showed me how to use a pipe clamp
His method, of course, was the only one
Fascism ran just below the surface
In the underground stream of cash flow
Racism, sexism and monetarism were part of
The salary and allowances package deal
Remuera wanted him but Epsom claimed him
His credentials were impeccable
What he lacked in subtlety and charm
He made up for in spending power
And sworn dedication to breed and consume
Running straight ahead without hesitation
Or an original thought in his zombie head
With dead certainty into an uncertain future
When things got tough you can be sure
He'd obey orders to kill all coloured people

One's first loyalty is to the shareholders
The ones who give you their money
Nice old people saving for retirement
No millionaire speculators, of course

In his hierarchy of business priorities
Customers and the public come a distant last
Business ethics need to be learned well
So that you don't get caught
You have to make shiploads of profit
So you can pay taxes and support society
Expensive advertising is necessary
To sell your unnecessary product lines
Enlisting the pliant client media
With the help of generous advertising revenue
To push the idea that business works for all
And generates wealth out of thin air
Rather than the guts of workers

He lets propaganda do his thinking for him
And tell him what to say, golden mouthpiece
Crammed with thirty pieces of silver
Haranguing the sheep from a plastic pulpit
A relay transmitter welded to his skull
Money talking through every orifice
And showing its gleaming white false teeth

How far from his destination now he lies.

Specialists

Don't marry an entomologist
Whose special field is spider eyes
They will want to classify you
As a reject of evolution

Don't marry an oncologist
They will live each day in fear
Of the disease which hides within
Afraid of missing the salient signs

Don't get involved with astronauts
Mountain climbers or scuba divers
They have a limited view of life

Don't get married to a politician
Who will want to debate everything
From the flavour of toothpaste
To how to bring up children,
Which end of the egg goes in the cup
And how to address a bishop

Don't marry the small-minded
Narrow-shouldered misfits
Bullied mercilessly at school
Who employ an oversized memory
In fighting their closed corner of knowledge

Who know everything about nothing,
Nothing about everything, overconfident
And undersocialised.

Don't get hooked up
With those who have cut off their feet
Rather than buy a pair of shoes
Who long ago decided against walking
Anywhere, even in the mind

Don't marry a sedated sleep-walker
Snoring in a university chair
Pronouncing clipped syllables ex cathedra
For the benefit of the clergy of academia

Don't marry a teacher, doctor, lawyer,
Scientist, weather forecaster or pope.

Suggestion for a kiwi flag

This land is the true heart of darkness
So

There should be a black background
With a white kiwi in the centre
Surrounded by a silver fern leaf
A one-eyed, one-legged, hunchback kiwi
Unable to fly or run
To defend or change opinion
A two-dimensional being, cut off
From heritage and culture
Worm-grubber, night-dweller
Clawing at money and wealth
Inhabiting the dense bush of the mind

In the top right-hand corner
A collection of stars, the Southern Cross
The kiwi stands with its back to them
Showing contempt for the transcendent
The immaterial vast expanse of space
And matter that holds the secret to his being
He's trapped in the circle of bush
Symbolised by the fern leaf
Iconic and referential of the rugby heads
Who have trampled the mud
Through twelve decades

Like a robot army in short trousers
They should feature also
Being the bloke's club, good keen hairy men,
The closest sad-git apologetic thing
To tradition that white men have known
Making laws, doing business, going to war
With a singular lack of real passion
Only the commitment of the automaton
Ball under arm, head down, running hard
In some general direction
Towards a wooden goal

Shallow aspirations, bird-bath for kiwi,
Give an illusion of new zeal and vigour
The city swarms with shoppers
And wealthy men in fitted suits
Who let the ghost hand of the market
Drive the wheels of industry
While they gobble up the profits

The libraries stand pristine and forlorn
Exotic trees, pines and macrocarpa
Push up through Aztec ruins
Of the former civilisation
Driving wide cracks in the carefully hewn
New Stone Age culture's stones
Severing all connection with meaning.

Thin reeds

Forced to do service
At things we're not good at
Because there are obstacles
To fitting us all in. The system
Is a blind idiot with a hammer
Not an eye surgeon with a blade
Smaller than a toothpick
We are shoe-horned in like porridge
Forced to fit, given any task to hand
While others linger or malingering
Never having been encouraged
To find and use the talents
They undoubtedly have, or had

You can push against closed doors
Try to find your niche
Wait for the bureaucracy to crumble
But it never does – it has outlived
Genghis Khan and Stalin,
The British Empire and every other.
It goes on, evolving just fast enough
To be still of service
Used by every form of misrule
From Nazism to so-called democracy
The people never had any power over it

They were not allowed a vote or a say
Only another form to fill

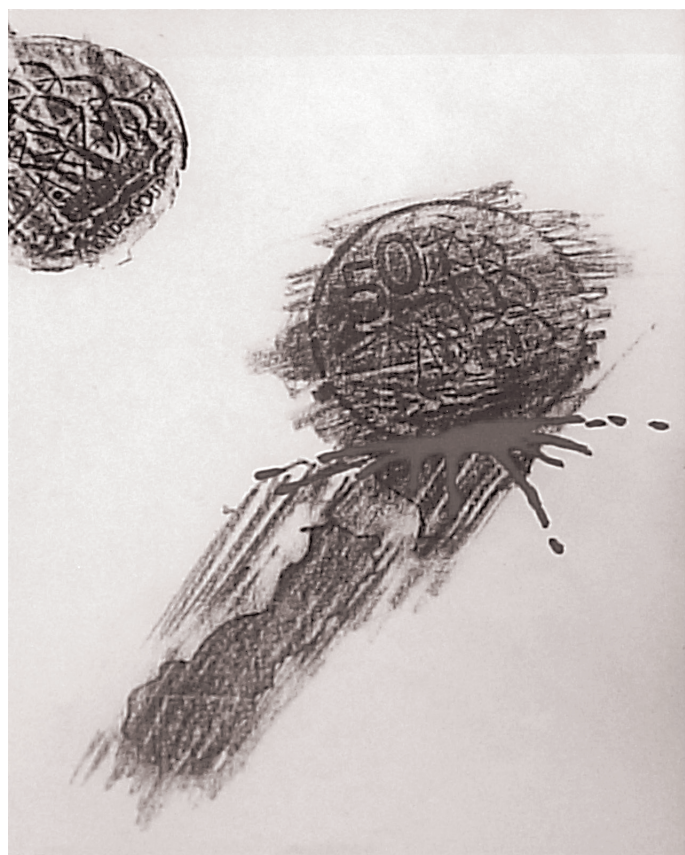
When the last politician is strangled
With the guts of the last bureaucrat
We can get on with the business
Of finding what we are good for
And how to enjoy using our hands.

Truth

There are three kinds of statement:
Truth, lies and fantasy
We make life tolerable by using the last two

For example, there are things I can't say
And things you don't want to hear
If we spoke truth all the time
The world would fall apart
Only in dreams do the three go together
Then there is the problem of discerning truth
Of knowing what we know and are about

The week ends as promised
More suffocating weather
A phone call at 3 a.m.
It's light outside and seems later
In a strange kind of symmetry
Nazi and Jew need each other
But it doesn't have to be that way.



View from below

White gloveless fingers on cold metal railings
Interrogated by a cold breeze from the south
Hold a placard protesting the farce
Of celebrating 150 years of confiscation
Night falls, lights go on up there
The red carpet is rolled out and vacuumed
Before the arrival of the queen's representative
Diplomatic vehicles are directed round the back
Incongruous joggers, cyclists and shoppers
Carrying plastic bags full of food
Pass on the forecourt, taking shortcuts
Between Molesworth and Bowen
Nobody impedes their progress

Told to stay behind the fences
We stand with banners and signs
Chanting for the television audience
Honour the Treaty – it's not too late
You feel like the beggar at the gate
Before the stone castle where supposed rank
And a cardboard mana are held up like weapons
The tired old 'might is right' bludgeon

One shrinks from being in this position
Yet again, asking for what you know
Will never be granted. The landscape has changed

Minds have narrowed, meanness abounds
And the convenient use of minorities
As scapegoats to explain why society has failed.

Visions

They come in ragged squadrons, random and irrational
Dreams of way-stations in the journey to anywhere
Like a motel on the moon, with people invading
My bathroom or maybe vice versa, embarrassment
And promise of something else which never happens
A brief half-heartbeat of story, open-ended but endless
With no beginning, cold rain drumming the roof, awake
And asleep, recalling the first years in this place

Monday is a beginning, a fumbling collecting of thoughts
As in the dream, trying to put sense together and disregard
The distractors, the fallen signposts on irrelevant byways
In the brain. Burning one highway to tomorrow, based on
Routines and necessary chores. The cold reduces movement
And emotion, rendering everything grey and useless, even
The high point of the year, supposedly, escape to summer
And renewing ties as one does on mornings, ties to the world
To some kind of destiny.

Half-hopes and obligations live
In the servitude of people who make up the fabric, the
Infrastructure which supports the great and famous:
Without them armies would not march or leaders rule
On Monday or any morning, starting history, searching
For meaning in conquest or financial success. Leaders
Can't go anywhere on their own, are drawn from the

Legion of bullies and sadists who see people as timber
For the fires of their insanity, food for their insatiable
Bellies and mouths

At the end it's how you coped and helped others
Cope, the view you had of them and if you really
Cared at all, if you lived in the spirit that informed
The creation of everything, the spirit of love. Or if you
Placed yourself at the centre and lived for self only
Which is never going to be good for others, especially
If you have arbitrary power. Maximum intimidation
Is the way of the arms of state, to discourage dissent
As well as criminality. It's easier to lean on the weak
And point the finger at the unheard, not the real target
While good people live and die, subject to injustices
And expected to shoulder all burdens. The State and its agents
Are parasitical, with the temerity to give orders to those
Who pay their salaries.

The rose-tinged clouds
Signal another end, evening in autumn, which is just as
Bad as winter sometimes, because winter is wrapped up
In it. Draw the curtains and shrink inside like hermit
In medieval cell or cave, with the intellect the fire at entrance
To keep wild beasts away. The menagerie of the world
Threatens every move and step in the night of ignorance

He made the stars also, a massive cloud of matter and light,
Some bigger than the solar system. That is the scale we fail
To comprehend, yet could if we stretched ourselves
The corner dairy is easier, fatally easier to encompass
In the routine of the day.

Death comes like a tax collector
And takes away what little you have secured.

Wire wove

Inhabiting third-rate flats
Of a mangy town like Auckland
In summer, fleas proliferated
From the filthy carpets
Of low student accommodation
In the absence of dogs, feeding on us
Until we resorted to chemical weapons
And bomb blasted the whole house

Sleeping cramped on the sagging wire wove
Bed frame, instrument of medieval torture
That gave you scoliosis and backache
The useless hobby fireplaces in bedrooms
Designed for Victorian beldames
High-ceilinged. I used to lie in bed
Waiting for the decorative moulded planks
To detach and fall on my head
After a hundred years of service

Recall old outdoor toilets
And bathrooms tacked on the back
Off a verandah, as if it were the tropics
In winter you didn't thank the builders
Or the architect, if there was one
During drinking parties was it worth it

To wander as far as the middle garden
To make water? Of course not, for a male

Think of kitchens, off-milk white painted walls
A disused coal range and chimney
Adding to the filth of the city
Everything old, a sixties refrigerator
Rubber seals shrunk and cracked like old chewing gum
The landlord in the same class as crooks
Who in unregulated nineteenth-century America
Sold adulterated milk and beer and poison
The carpet rose when the wind blew
Under the draughty house. We were thinner
Warm blood battling the elements
The indifference and neglect of the ruling class
The dumb and spoken insolence of teachers
Who lived in parts of town we never saw
Or intended to see, let alone live in

Here I am still laying into them, the haves
Whose lives are predicated on theft and rapine
And justifying why they should have more
They'll still drive cars while the rest walk
As we did, all over the place
Not so much as knowing a bus timetable
Because in those days a bus fare
Would buy you bread and milk for lunch

Nothing's changed.

SONGS

Burning lemmings

Your daddy owns a Caddy and a Porsche
And he drives like Cesare Borgia
He's addicted to his machine
He shoots it up with gasoline

On Sunday he gets down on his knees
To wash away every trace of grease
He drinks whisky from the bottle
And steps hard on the throttle

Look at those burning lemmings
Watch them leap and fall
What's with those crazy lemmings?
Have they got no brains at all?

It was a bummer of a summer in Top Town
He couldn't drive with the top down
All those traffic jams made him mad as
A turkey with two full bladders

He burns on down the harbour drive
I don't know how he's still alive
Motorways are unforgiving
But he's still in the land of the living

Look at those burning lemmings *etc.*

He's a chiselling right-wing quisling merchant banker
If you listen to him too much you'll get cancer
He's a capitalist operator
With his foot on the accelerator

He doesn't care about you at all
He drives you right up the wall
He never picks up a hitchhiker
He can stick it up his balalaika

Look at those burning lemmings
Watch those suckers fall
What's with those crazy lemmings
Have they got no brains at all?

Capitalist cheerleaders

FAT GITS IN SUITS

They meet in Melbourne, they meet in New York
They know what they're doing, they do more than talk
Wealthy Elite Fraudsters, they're slick and move fast
Profit comes first and other people come last

Capitalism works – don't try to knock it
It works because the government's in their pocket
They've got control of the money supply
But no politician is asking why

Fat gits, fat gits, fat gits in suits
Don't let your sisters near fat gits in suits

Supporting 'democracy' is their stratagem
But when did we ever vote for them?
They pay the cops to keep us in line
They spell 'success' with a dollar sign

They trash your wages like never before
Then wonder why they can't make you spend more
They feed the workers into their machines
Business is war by another means

Fat gits, fat gits, fat gits in suits
Don't let your girlfriends near fat gits in suits

They met in Gleneagles to carve up the turf
If you're not one of them, you're only a serf
They're the cosa nostra and the cosa nova
They shoot you first and then run you over

They own the world and the company store
They don't want a lot, they only want more
The boss has a car and a place to park it
But there's not much freedom in the free market

Fat gits, fat gits, fat gits in suits
Don't let your mothers near fat gits in suits

If you ask my opinion of their stewardship
I'll drop my trousers, bend over and let rip
If we're going to defeat their master plan
We need to eat the rich and burn the white man

Fat gits, fat gits, fat gits in suits
Don't let your brothers near fat gits in suits

Capitalist crisis

The American dream is a pyramid scheme
With you at the bottom
Uncle Sam and his Nigerian scam
That aims to keep you poor
Toxic debt from a billionaire bet
Corporate welfarism
Paupers starve to keep the rich man fat
That's capitalism
Left Right Left Right Left Right

Competition is attrition
Monopoly is the goal
Greed endorses market forces
Backed by the fascist state
Bosses socialise the losses
Left Right Left Right Left Right

The banker's dream is a Ponzi scheme
Multiplying money and debt
When it falls over you lose your job
And they collect a bonus
Low-wage slaves packed in mass graves
And the sausage machine
Fed in spat out all the same
Victims of market failure
Left Right Left Right Left Right

Corporate welfare

You go to the zoo
See a monkey with its hand out
Corporate bludger
Government bail-out
Corporate filth
Corporate welfare
Greedy rich suits on the dole

Organised crime
Fraudulent business
Corporate slime
Parasite wasters
Corporate theft
Establishment bandits
When were they ever loyal to you?

Ten thousand Pharaohs
Six billion slaves
Concentrating wealth
Spreading the poverty
Corporate gamblers
Blood-sucking leeches
As long as you've still got blood to give

Capital's swag-men
Government bag-men

Run the world casino
Of speculation
Promising jobs
Delivering slavery

Q. Who called the businessman a crim?

A. Who called the crim a businessman?

F is for Fascist

F is for Fascist – F-F-F-F-Fascist

A brain-dead nation marching in formation

Tasty finger-lickin' flock of headless chicken

Public exclusion, planned confusion

Social engineering, rampant profiteering

New Right fascists

Opiate of the masses

Corporate culture – everyone's a vulture

Unelected power in a high-rise tower

Global bulldozer, closer and closer

Louder and louder, grinding you to powder

Global fascists

Ashes to ashes

Fully commercial – it's controversial

A profit-driven focus. Sharks, wolves and locusts

Seriously vicious greedy avaricious

Business operators, right-wing dictators

Free-trade fascists

Heroin and hashish

A far-right junta preying on the punter

Privatised health introduced by stealth

Fascist bureaucracy, media mediocracy

White man's burden, coloured man's murder

World Bank fascists

Conspiracy of racists
Market forces, flogged-to-death horses
Monetarist parrots – a stick and no carrots
Gustav Mahler didn't live in Khandallah
Mussolini always wore a beanie

Fascist state fascists
Bullet wounds and gashes
Indoctrination – a TV education
Using subliminal methods (it's criminal)
Confident idiots, ethical midgets
Following Big Brother, dobbing in your mother

Television fascists
Millionaire elitists
Parliamentary fascists
Slash and burn slashers
Multinational business keeps on hittin' us
Government tanks defending the banks

Media fascists
Off-the-peg fascists
Bargain basement fascists
Dirty hippy fascists
Business-friendly fascists
Billionaire fascists
Sweatshop fascists
Corporate fascists
Transnational fascists
WTO fascists
IMF fascists
Tory fascists
Kiwi fascists
Remuera fascists
Market fascists
Big business fascists

Transit fascists
City Hall fascists
Wall-to-wall fascists
Sure-to-fall fascists
Money-loving fascists

F-F-F-F-Fascist F-F-F-F-Fascist
F-F-F-F-Fascist F-F-F-F-Fascist F-F-F-F-Fascist

Guerrilla love

From about the age of eight
I read Proudhon and smashed the state
Property is theft and profit is loss
And don't ever drop your tweeds for a boss

You look smashing with your head half shorn
You look cool with your jeans all torn
You look great dressed in black
Even if you wore a rubbish sack

The first of May is our special date
You look smashing when you smash the state

You stand out from the human race
You're more than just a pretty face
Those studs in your eyebrow, ears and nose
Are like the thorns on a rose

Would it upset you if I say
I really love your DNA?
We could be like fist in glove
United in guerrilla love

I'm going to spend my tax rebate
Gonna buy an axe and smash the state

You got a mind that throws off sparks
You got more savvy than Karl Marx
You're old enough not to vote
And you'd never marry a rich old goat

I can't explain – it's something innate
That makes me want to smash the state

You know it's time to wipe the slate
Let's clean up and smash the state
Things are bad but it's not too late
Let's get smashing and smash the state
Even if it's covered in armour plate
Let's get smashing and smash the state
Let's settle down and smash the state
Let's have kids who smash the state

Why don't we smash the state why don't we smash the state
why don't we...

Johnny Jingo

Johnny Jingo lives next door
He's the boss man of the town
Johnny Jingo went to war
His hands were red, his nose was brown

He'll buy free trade at any price
Genocide washes whiter
When he's used it once or twice
His conscience is much lighter

He's a lying, crawling, standing joke
He's a baby-killing dingo
And thanks for nothing, thank you very much
Thank you, Johnny Jingo

He extends a hand to the native race
(Or at the least, a finger)
He'll treat you right if you know your place
Or his name's not Johnny Jingo

Johnny sits on a porcelain throne
It's permanent war – he'll do his bit
No way is he bringing the troops back home
Though he has that trade deal in his mitt

He'll stick like glue to his blood-brothers
George and Tony Bingo

And thanks for nothing, thank you very much
Thank you, Johnny Jingo

He'll do what he can, he'll stay the course
He'll support George Bush to the last day
Terrorists don't have an airforce
They deliver bombs another way

He's not afraid to show his face
Or the other one, by Jingo
Thanks for making the world a safer place
Thank you, Johnny Jingo

Know your enemy

It's no mystery – know the history
Know the territory, know your enemy
Fonterritory – dirty dairy
Aggrobusiness cash cow battery
Dairy industry, milk farm factory
Laced with melamine to kill the baby

Stinking rivers up, burning rainforest down
Pumping profits up, taking the country down

Know your enemy, Rakon Industries
Kill civilians with technology
Death facility, murder industry
Guides the missile to kill the baby
US strategy – it's a tragedy
Lacks the empathy, has no sympathy

Blowing things up and shooting people down
Spreading misery throughout history

Know your enemy resist the infamy
Know your history and how it ought to be
Government policy, false economy
Robs the parents and kills the baby
Fight state larceny and plutocracy
Have the temerity to challenge authority

It's time to stand your ground and take the big guys down
Time to rise up, raise your fist up high
Eternal vigilance of the dissidents
Let's turn things around and take the big man down

Mean old goat

How'd you like to marry a rusty nail?
How'd you like to spend 40 years in jail?
How'd you like to marry a mean old goat –
A geezer who'll kiss you with his hands round your throat?

Businessmen are from Mars, the rest of us from Venus
He's the wealthiest kiwi, and the meanest
He's got dirt on his hands and beer on his breath
The love of money is the kiss of death

He can't wait to get his hands round your throat
He's a mean old grasping old mean old goat

He smiles as if it's hurting him inside
He's got everything to lose and everything to hide
He'll promise you the earth, then lock you in his dungeon
And scarper double-quick to his house in London

He's got a beautiful house but he's ugly as sin
If you're dressed in rags he won't let you in
He made his millions out of ersatz booze
The more he's got, the more he's got to lose

He can't wait to get his hands round your throat
He's a mean old grasping old mean old goat

He says he loves the poor man, he pays a bit of tax
He'll do everything for us except get off our backs
But all his assets are a woodworm crutch
His philosophy of life isn't worth all that much

He's an adventurer, and that's no myth
He's done everything he could get away with
He's a capitalist cowboy riding the range
But he doesn't see any need to change

He can't wait to get his hands round your throat
He's a mean old grasping old mean old goat

He'll never be anything but a talking head
He's part of the system but the system's dead
He's the greediest man you'll ever come across
Business is business, but profit is loss

He's absolutely positively filthy rich
He doesn't care how many of us fall into the ditch
His greedy great hands are full of blood
He doesn't care who else is trampled in the mud

He can't wait to get his hands round your throat
He's a mean old grasping old mean old goat

He's the squire, the landlord and the boss rolled into one
Profiteer, usurer, middleman and dun
He supports the rights of the wealthy caste:
'The first shall be first, and the last shall be last'

He's the foremost exponent of the culture of greed:
'Take what you want, take all you need'
But remember when he tries to tear you limb from limb
The only power he's got is what you give to him

Don't ever marry a mean old goat
He can't wait to get his hands round your throat
Mean old grasping old mean old grubby old goat

Meathead George

Meathead George said 'Let's have a war –
Twice as big as the one before –
I'm gonna protect American soil
It don't mean nothing that Iraq has oil'

Meathead George
Don't mess with the sheriff don't mess with Meathead George

Meathead George is hungry for oil. It
Appears he's flushed his shorts down the toilet
He's an emperor without any clothes
Does he have a brain? Nobody knows

Meathead George *etc.*

Meathead George got caught in the middle
His Enron mates were on the fiddle
His family made its fortune out of black gold
Don't trust George, he's bought and sold

Meathead George *etc.*

The world's greatest terrorist
Is Meathead George the imperialist
He got where he is by corruption
And he's got weapons of mass destruction

Meathead George *etc.*

Meathead George has some ugly mates
He's the president of fifty rogue states
Most people didn't want him to get in
Just twenty-four per cent elected the cretin

Meathead George, I'm gonna pray
For a regime change in the USA
Put up your guns and don't be reckless
Resign and get your rich ass back to Texas

Meathead George
Don't mess with the sheriff don't mess with Meathead George
Don't mess with the sheriff don't mess with Osama Bush

Murder Media

Murdoch writes the word, on tabloid toilet paper
Black and white lies, mirrors, smoke and vapour
'Propaganda must not serve the truth'
If it's a good story you don't need any proof

Murder Media
Don't believe the papers
Whatever they say
Don't believe the bollocks

Tabloid Babylon; it's not left but sinister
Horror shock and awe: MURDOCH

HACKED

MY HAMSTER

An idiot lantern show is the drug of choice
Doing what you're told by His Master's Voice

Murder Media
Don't believe the newscast
Whatever they say
Don't believe the bollocks

Serving lies for lunch, Fox and Time Warner
Night nurse to the dead, glass eye in the corner
Murder Media – every home should have one
As Adolf advised – make the lie a big one

Whatever they say
Don't believe the papers
Whatever they say
Don't believe the bollocks

Pirate punk

If you want to be free then listen to me
If you want to be free, sail to sea
Pack your trunk, get rid of all that junk
Pack your trunk, become a dirty pirate punk

Wahey – now that I've got your
Attention, why don't you hoist the Jolly Roger
Scale the mast, become an artful dodger
Wahey – hoist the Jolly Roger

The world's on fire and the president's a liar
The captain's drunk, the economy's sunk
I'm off to be a pirate punk
I'm going to be a pirate punk

White boy

FOR CLINT RICKARDS AND THE NAZIONAL FRUNT

Oi White Boy

White Boy White Boy White Boy

White Boy has a swastika skull
His favourite sport is a seal cull
White Boy – addicted to violence
White Boy – feeds on your silence

Oi white boy *etc.*

White Boy likes to see you bleed
White Boy is driven on by greed
White Boy riding a big fat tank
White Boy working in a bank

Oi white boy *etc.*

White Boy white face and head of bone
White Boy following you home
Makes you want to cross the street
White Boy is a cop on the beat

Oi white boy *etc.*

White Boy carries a concrete sack
White Boy is always watching your back
Look out – your money or your life
White Boy is packing a carving knife

Oi white boy *etc.*

White Boy – he treads a dark path
White Boy breaks wind in the bath
White Boy's always in your face
He's the cancer of the human race

Oi white boy *etc.*



1. tri
09

Ya Basta

Why does a peasant need a gun?
Why is the human race on the run?
You got to be united, you have to be tough
Shout Ya Basta, enough is enough

Ya Basta, Ya Basta

If you're in the family of the poor
You got nothing to lose, that's for sure
Bounty hunters have unfurled
A ring of terror around the world

Ya Basta, Ya Basta

The banker comes and takes your land
Leaves a scorpion in your hand
You ask for food – they give you a stone
You ask to be heard – they sell you a mobile phone

Ya Basta, Ya Basta

Capital's capos at the gate
Stand on the ruins of the nation state
You don't want to go where they're coming from
They use their wealth like a neutron bomb

Ya Basta, Ya Basta

On the consumer superhighway to hell
You need to resist, you need to rebel
If you want to win the Fourth World War
Be a Zapatista wherever you are

Ya Basta, Ya Basta

There's a pile of pressure building below
It's a volcano ready to blow
You got to be united, you have to be tough
Shout Ya Basta, enough is enough

Enough is enough, Ya Basta
Ya Basta, Ya Basta

Notes

Urewary

A poem about the 15th October 2007 police 'terror' raids and their aftermath, written in January 2008. Various accusers in the police conspiracy are named.

Police commissioners Howard Broad and Jon White (his deputy): Broad resigned, belatedly, in 2010.

Ahmed Zaoui, an Algerian refugee who feared assassination in his own country, remained in detention in Auckland from 2002-04 and subsequently under bail conditions until 2007 because the Security Intelligence Service, supported by the government, claimed he was a security threat to New Zealand. No credible evidence was produced and he was eventually allowed stay in the country. His family, whom he had left in Malaysia five years earlier, joined him in 2007.

SIS: the Security Intelligence Service, equivalent of MI5 or the FBI, allegedly under the purview of the prime minister as minister for the SIS, but acting independently. Its operations are opaque to everyone outside the organisation, often including the prime minister.

Helen Clark (then prime minister), Annette King (minister of police) and Michael Cullen (deputy prime minister and attorney general) could have stopped the prosecution but chose to leave it up to the police and justice system. Clark signed the arrest warrants required to commence the terror raids and later prejudged the case by alleging in the media that the accused 'had napalm'. A statement by King, that the police were independent, implied that they were beyond parliamentary, and thus democratic, control.

The solicitor-general decided, after deliberating for a month, during which the accused were kept in jail, that the Terrorism Suppres-

sion Act (TSA) was not applicable. He suggested, however, that the alleged actions of the accused and the police evidence were of a serious nature, which subsequent events have contradicted. The charges were altered to illegal possession of firearms. A year later, the trumped-up charge of ‘participating in an organised criminal group’ was brought against five of the accused.

Operation Eight: the police name for the covert surveillance operation leading to the arrests on 15 October 2007 and subsequently.

‘We are the coercive arm of the state’: a description of the police force by Police Association president Greg O’Connor, June 2005.

Confiscation line: a line drawn through the Urewera territory after a 19th century ‘rebellion’, divesting the Tūhoe nation of 5700 hectares, including most of the fertile flat land. During the raids of 15 October 2007, police roadblocks were set up on this line to prevent free movement.

Trial by judge alone was requested by the crown prosecution on the grounds that the case was too complex for a jury to understand and granted by the Auckland High Court in 2010 (subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court ruling in September 2011).

Autumn in the mind

Musician David Bowie performed on a wet windy night in Wellington on 14 February 2004.

The penultimate line of this poem alters one from J. P. Donleavy: ‘Writing is turning one’s worst moments into money.’

Buffalo Bill and Nixon

In the post-World War II decade, with improved nutrition, the average height of women in the USA was three inches (8 cm) more than that of their mother’s generation, but has increased little since; women aged 20–29 were nearly 29 pounds (13 kg) heavier on average in 2002 compared to 1960.

Biggest, tallest, largest: a traveller through the USA noted that every town and city had a sign at its entrance boasting that it had some man-made object that was the largest, longest, tallest, or some other superlative, in the USA or the world.

‘Get there fastest with the mostest’: erroneously attributed to Confederate lieutenant-general Nathan Bedford Forrest (1821–77), regarding his military strategy.

Bullets first: the Hollywood cowboy's modus operandi of 'shoot first and ask questions later'.

Slick Willie and Meathead George: nicknames for presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

'Freedom of speech ... Just watch what you say': title of a 1989 album by Ice-T, featuring a rap by Jello Biafra.

Clown army

Te Papa Tongarewa, 'Our Place', the national museum on the Wellington waterfront, hosted a conference for weapons manufacturers for five years running, 2002-2006. Demonstrations against the conference and museum management grew larger year by year, and finally the conference was transferred to a nearby hotel, The Duxton.

Harry Lime: the villain of Graham Greene's novel *The Third Man*. Lime sold stolen diluted penicillin on the black market, leading to the death of many people, including children ill with meningitis.

Coastal

Paekakariki (Māori: roost of the green parakeet): a small coastal settlement 45 km north-east of Wellington.

4x4: four-wheel-drive recreational vehicles (SUVs).

IRD: Inland Revenue (tax) Department.

Dodder

Raumati (Māori: summer): a coastal settlement 50 km north-east of Wellington.

Ed is dead

A poem written shortly after the funeral of Sir Edmund Hillary (1919-2008), a New Zealand mountaineer who was first, along with Tenzing Norgay, to ascend Mt Everest in 1953 ('we knocked the bastard off'). He later (1957-58) took part in the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition, recorded in his book *No Latitude for Error*. His portrait appears on the New Zealand five-dollar note.

Over 200 people have died climbing Mt Everest.

The remains of the Unknown Warrior, mentioned in another poem, were taken from a military graveyard in France to a new mausoleum in Buckle Street, Wellington, in November 2004.

Charles Upham (1908-94): a New Zealand World War II hero, who won the Victoria Cross (VC) twice and returned to sheep farming after the war.

Campbell Live: a television news commentary programme.

'In the future everyone will be famous for 15 minutes.' – Andy Warhol (1921-87)

All Blacks, Silver Ferns: the national rugby and netball teams, respectively.

The elect

'All political parties die at last of swallowing their own lies.' – John Arbuthnot (1667–1735)

The elite

Rusty oversized armour: an image taken from Jonathan Swift's *Battle of the Books*, published 1704.

Elvis

Elvis Presley (1935-77) had a reputation for shooting television sets when other entertainers such as Frank Sinatra were performing on them. He also shot his 1975 yellow Pantera sports car when it refused to start.

His name is Jim

On 11 November 2004, the newly-built mausoleum at the National War Memorial in Buckle Street, Wellington, received the remains of the Unknown Warrior, a World War I Battle of the Somme casualty. A street parade past 100,000 people preceded a military funeral complete with a volley of gunshots. The New Zealand public had not been consulted about the project, which was promoted by the Returned and Services' Association and backed by the government of the day, especially the prime minister, Helen Clark, who appeared to believe that dead soldiers, though unable to vote, generated significant political capital.

Holmes

A poem inspired by Paul Holmes (b. 1950), who fronted a television news commentary programme (modestly called *Holmes*) from 1989 to 2004, after an earlier career on radio. A follow-up show with the same name lasted six months. He combined these with a weekday radio

breakfast show for 23 years until 2008 and later hosted a weekly TV programme.

Selwyn Toogood (1916-2001) hosted a quiz show, first on radio and later on television, called *It's in the Bag*, which cleverly capitalised on fear and greed, in the conflict caused by contestants having to choose between the unknown prize in the bag, which could be near-worthless, and a stated sum of money, which could turn out to be of less value than the prize in the bag.

'The great man dies twice; once as a man and once as a great man.' – Paul Valéry (1871-1945).

Iconoclast

'Motherhood and apple pie': a dismissive phrase for anything seen as anodyne and universally acceptable.

King Kong

A poem inspired by a Wellington film-maker's unnecessary remake of a classic film.

Line of the day

During the presidency (1981-1989) of Ronald Reagan (1911-2004), an agreed 'line of the day' was concocted by his advisors and colleagues each morning to address any crisis or potential criticism, and purveyed to reporters. This may well have been the case in other presidencies also.

Dog-whistle: a message buried in a politician's speech that arouses prejudices in bigots who are sensitised and sympathetic to it, but is not heard by the rest of the audience.

List poem

This poem is a parody of one written by a luminary of the International Institute of Modern Letters ('the insular institute of hyperbole'), part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences at Victoria University, Wellington.

Weta: a New Zealand insect.

Megiddo: an ancient city-state in Palestine, site of several battles, Greek name Armageddon.

Taupata: a small New Zealand native tree.

Kelburn and Kohimarama: two wealthy suburbs, the former in Wellington and the latter in Auckland. Also referred to, with Khandallah, Wellington, as 'K block', the suburban counterpart to 'D block', the highest security wing of the maximum security prison at Paremoremo, Auckland.

Loophole

Makes tangential reference to the New Zealand parliament's Civil Union (2003) and Foreshore and Seabed (2004) legislation.

The everlasting bonfire: Hell (*Macbeth* II.iii.22).

One love

Bob Marley's birthday coincides with the public holiday commemorating the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, 6 February. An open-air reggae concert, free at first and later with an entry fee, has been held every year at the Hataitai velodrome, Wellington, since 1997.

President's grandfather: George W. Bush's grandfather Prescott Bush was a director and shareholder of companies that profited from their involvement with the financial backers of Nazi Germany.

'If voting changed anything they'd abolish it' – Ken Livingstone, mayor of London 2000-08.

'There's no justice, there's just us' – Richard Pryor, US comedian, early 1970s.

Perfect storm

A poem about right-wing former accountant, Labour cabinet minister and South Auckland pig-farmer, Roger Douglas (b. 1937), one of the architects of 1980s neoliberal economic restructuring. Early in the Great Recession, during an avalanche of finance company collapses and other examples of neoliberal economic policy failures, he announced his intention to return to parliament. He served another term as a backbencher in the ACT party from 2008-11 while causing little further damage to the nation.

On 14 September 1991, *The New Zealand Herald* reported that Sunshine Pig Farms Ltd, situated at Old Great South Road, Ramarama, near Drury in South Auckland, had gone into receivership the previous day, but that the receiver would continue to trade. Managed by Roger Douglas Associates, the property kept 5000 pigs in stalls.

Piper

The school: The Learning Connexion art school, Island Bay, Wellington (now Taita, Hutt Valley).

Pop culture

Woman's Weekly: a popular weekly woman's magazine.

Postie Plus: a mail-order clothing catalogue.

Pakuranga: a newer suburb of Auckland inhabited by a high proportion of younger couples with children; also known as Nappy Valley.

Britney: Britney Spears, faded US pop icon.

Pyramid scheme

Mammon: the god of materialism, New Zealand's predominant religious philosophy.

Rome

Remuera, Epsom: Plutocratic suburbs of Auckland.

'Oh God, how far he lies from his destination now.' A line from Federico Fellini's 1969 film *Satyricon*, based on the Latin picaresque novel by Petronius Arbiter (c. 27-66).

Specialists

'The specialist knows more and more about less and less and finally knows everything about nothing.'

– Konrad Lorenz (1903-89), zoologist and Nobel prize winner.

Suggestion for a kiwi flag

A new national flag was debated, without much heat or light, from 1998 until 2005, when a petition failed to gain sufficient numbers to launch a referendum on the issue.

The Māori culture, though highly evolved, has been classified by archaeologists as 'New Stone Age', due to Māori having no access to metals before the arrival of Europeans.

Thin reeds

'When the last politician...': an adaptation of a quotation by Denis Diderot (1713-84): 'Men will never be free until the last king is strangled with the entrails of the last priest.'

View from below

A description of a protest held at parliament by a group of mainly Māori activists, on the occasion of the celebration of 150 years of representative government in New Zealand, 24 May 2004.

Molesworth and Bowen: streets bordering parliament grounds.

‘Honour the Treaty’: a Māori rights slogan.

Visions

He made the stars also: The greatest throwaway line in history, from the first chapter of Genesis. These five words (three in the original Hebrew: שָׁמַיִם ... תָּאֵר וְהָאָרֶץ) refer to the entire universe apart from the earth, sun and moon, estimated to consist of between 10^{22} and 10^{24} stars and measuring at least 93 billion light-years in diameter.

Burning lemmings

A song about people addicted to petrol and building more roads.

Cesare Borgia (c. 1476-1507): Medieval Italian leader, praised by Machiavelli in *Il Principe* as an ideal prince – opportunistic, aggressive and ruthless.

Top Town: an accolade briefly enjoyed by Wellington, New Zealand, in 2000.

Merchant banker: Cockney rhyming slang.

Capitalist cheerleaders

Wealthy Elite Fraudsters: World Economic Forum (WEF).

The G8 (group of eight wealthiest nations) met in the golfing resort of Gleneagles, Scotland, in July 2005. The original lyrics had Genoa, where the G8 met in July 2001; during those protests, an Italian man, Carlo Giuliani was shot dead and run over by police; many other demonstrators were injured and arrested.

Capitalist crisis

Ponzi scheme: an investment scam named after one of its earlier perpetrators, in which returns on investments are paid using further investments, leading to an ever-growing snowball of liability and debt, which eventually overwhelms the scheme, similar to the repeated financial crises of orthodox capitalism. Bernie Madoff (b. 1938) operated the largest Ponzi scheme in history over several decades and was sentenced in July 2009 to 150 years in prison.

Corporate welfare

Pharaohs: the political and corporate elite, millionaires, billionaires, bankers *et alia*.

F is for Fascist

Gustav Mahler (1860-1911): an Austrian composer.

Khandallah: see note for *List poem* above.

Transit: a road-building company that turned over \$NZ 55 million dollars (original tender \$39.9 million) on constructing the unnecessary Wellington inner city 'bypass', opened 28 December 2006.

Guerrilla love

Pierre Proudhon (1809-65): a French politician and philosopher, the first person to call himself an anarchist, who asserted in his first major work *What is property?* that property is theft.

First of May, May Day: a northern hemisphere spring festival, later marked as International Workers Day or Labour Day, and celebrated by anarchists, unionists and other leftist groups.

Johnny Jingo

A song about the former Australian prime minister John Howard (b. 1939), supporter of US president George W. Bush's Middle East wars and of detention centres for asylum-seekers. Australia gained a free-trade agreement with the US during his tenure. Together with Tony Blair ('Tony Bingo') he was a deputy sheriff for President Bush. Another nickname for Howard was Skippy the Bush Kangaroo. He also refused to consider making an official apology to the Aboriginal people for historical abuses.

'A terrorist is someone who has a bomb, but doesn't have an air force.' – William Blum (b.1933), US author and historian. His definition shows the (lack of) difference between the two sides in the War on Terror, a 'war without end', which was perceived as being good for US business but was one of the factors leading to the US debt crisis and the Great Recession, which began in 2008.

Know your enemy

Fonterritory: a large part of New Zealand is now owned by farmers producing milk for Fonterra, a New Zealand-based multinational dairy cooperative. It had a 43 per cent financial stake in the Sanlu milk

powder company in China, which sold melamine-contaminated infant milk powder and was prosecuted and bankrupted in 2008, some of its executives going to jail.

Rakon Industries: a New Zealand-based company manufacturing crystal oscillators for missile and 'smart bomb' guidance systems in weapons used by the US and Israeli military forces.

Mean old goat

A song about a brewery magnate who headed the New Zealand 'rich list' several years ago, while living in London. He has since been surpassed on the list by other, more assiduous, collectors of capital.

The opening line is a direct quote from a 'mental health consumer' and is patently nonsensical.

Meathead George

A song about the Texan George W. Bush (b.1946), US president from 2001 to 2009. In his first election fewer than half of the eligible population voted and he gained fewer than half of all votes cast.

Enron Corporation: a Texas-based energy company which was in 2001 the biggest bankruptcy and auditing failure in US history; over 18 months its share price fell from \$90 to \$1 and several of its executives were jailed for fraud, as covered in the film *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* (2005).

Murder Media

Rupert Murdoch (b. 1931): the Australian media magnate, founder of News Corporation, the world's second-largest media group, which includes Twentieth Century Fox film studios and the Fox News Network. One of its main rivals is Time Warner.

His Master's Voice: a music company, later taken over by EMI.

'Propaganda must not investigate the truth objectively and, in so far as it is favourable to the other side, present it according to the theoretical rules of justice; yet it must present only that aspect of the truth which is favourable to its own side' and 'The great mass of the people ... will more easily fall victim to a big lie than to a small one' are from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1924).

White boy

Clint Rickards (b.1961): a former deputy police commissioner whose career was cut short by historical rape allegations. He was found not guilty in two trials in 2006. The juries in both trials were not allowed to hear of the previous convictions of his two co-accused, or that they were both currently serving sentences for a rape committed in 1989. Rickards resigned from the police force in 2007, one day before he was due to appear before an internal police conduct inquiry.

National Front: a small far-right neo-Nazi group.

‘Concrete sack’: an elliptical reference to the ‘concrete socks’ mode of execution favoured by mafiosos.

‘Cancer of the human race’ references Susan Sontag’s ‘the white race is the cancer of human history’.

Ya Basta

Ya Basta (Spanish: enough is enough) is a slogan of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN), a revolutionary leftist group based in the Chiapas district of Mexico. The song contains many phrases and ideas used by Subcomandante Marcos, the main spokesperson for the EZLN, including ‘the Fourth World War’, which is the war currently being waged by global capitalism on the poor. The Third World War is taken to have been the Cold War (1945-1990).

